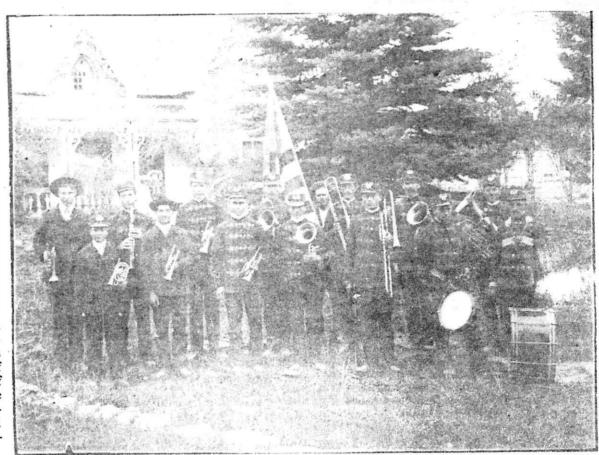
Midway Flag

organizing the settlers into defined military units for greater security. On June 26, 1866, they organized the militia of Wasatch County and held an inspection drill at Heberville, where a fort had also been recently constructed. Major Witt of Heberville was placed in command of the District which had three battalions--one of cavalry and two of infantry--to be known as the Wasatch Military District. Sidney Epperson and John Hamilton were appointed Majors over Fort Midway, with John Watkins as bugler.

Fort Midway was conducted under military law, having officers and picket patrol, with men arising to assigned duty at the call of the bugle. The militia was in complete charge of all activities necessary for the welfare and general good of the community.

With the organization of the Military District and the approaching completion of the Fort Midway settlement, Sidney Epperson was concerned about the lack of availability of an American Flag of "colors" to be flown at Fort Midway and to be used on campaign against the indians. Realizing the importance of having a suitable flag for the battalion and Fort Midway use, Mary Jane Robey Epperson, Sidney's Wife, commenced the construction of a large American flag. The material for the flag came from bedsheets, which were hand dyed and sewn. When completed, the flag contained less than the standard 13 stripes of red and blue and had only 18 of the 34 stars typical to the American Flag utilized throughout the Civil War years from 1861 to 1865--an omission necessitat-

Cont. to 8



Midway Flag History (Continued)

Cont. from 7

material and circumstances.

War, which ended in 1867 after during the Blackhawk War. talks between the Indians and When it was time to disband. County. At that time, most of the old fort location was preserved

settle on a reservation in the settlements were never rebuilt. Uintah Basin. Chief Tabby. another Ute leader in the late clothing, blankets and hats.

two years and resulted in the Heber.

ed due to the exigencies of time, death of fifty settlers and resulted in property loss to the When completed, the flag was settlers of more than utilized by the Midway Battalion \$1,000,000.00. Fortunately, Fort throughout the Blackhawk Indian Midway was never attacked Mormon leaders occurred at most of the settlers decided to Mount Pleasant in Sanpete remain near Fort Midway. The by the town as a public square Ute Indians were persuaded to and the upper and lower

Sidney H. Epperson, in 1872, summer of 1867, brought tribe built a home across the street members to the Heber Valley, from the town square, which is and after moking the peace pipe now owned and occupied by with community leaders, entered Winona Epperson. With the into a peace agreement. With disbanding of the fort, the old peace having been declared, the eigteen star American Flag settlers put on a tremendous remained in the possession of feast for the indians and sent Sidney H. Epperson until his them away with gifts including death in 1913. Prior to his death, it was carried in special parades The Blackhawk War lasted for and events in Midway and

through 1960 at the Midway forgotten. Harvest Festival, later called

to ensure its preservation. Since Midway Flag, now 118 years old, and history.

Sidney H. Epperson, carried the the second floor of the Midway community spirit of those first old flag on horseback from 1954 Town Hall, largely ignored and

Sid Epperson, a grandson of 1967 the flag has remained on symbolizes the courage and

inhabitants of Wasatch County. There are many individuals and it would seem appropriate to Swiss Days. The flag remained in still residing in the Heber Valley make more readily available for the Sidney H. Epperson home who are fourth-, fifth-, or public display the "Old Fort until 1967 when Dan and Mollie sixth-generation descendants of Midway Flag" at such special the last surviving children of the early settlers who "forted occasions as Swiss Days. where Sidney H. Epperson, entrusted in" at Midway during the this community celebrates and the flag to Lethe Coleman Tathge Blackhawk War. The old fort gives thought to its rich heritage

Come On Out and **Enjoy Swiss Days**

when the Peter Shirts, Ephraim we'll call it Midway." Hanks, Jno Hanks, and Riggs numerous other families arrived. down Snake Creek for four miles. Sidney H. Epperson was appointed presiding Elder over the colonists on June 26, 1862, and by 1864 it is estimated that fifty-six families were members of the two settlements.

decree, the settlers on the western half of the Heber Valley agreed in principle that they should band together in one location to build a fort for mutual protection and security. However, the upper settlement colonists the lower settlement colonists did not feel like moving

to the upper settlement.

In the spring of 1866, under the direction of presiding Elder Sidney H. Epperson, a compromise location was selected halfway between the two settlements and they commenced to "fort in". The name Fort Sidney was reportedly first suggested in honor of their leader and met with unanimous approval, but Sidney said, "No,

The first step in laying out the families arrived in the valley and fort and settlement was the settled some four miles above the survey of the townsite. John first colony on Snake Creek. This Huber and Sidney Epperson upper settlement later came to carried the tape, Mark Smith and be known as Mound City, Attewall Wootton the pegs, and presumably having been named within a few days Midway was by John Huber. After 1860 laid out in large blocks thirty-two rods square, with a Main Street locating on the west side of six rods wide and side streets the Heber Valley and up and four rods in width. A public square where the fort settlement was to be placed was set aside in the center of the new town site, and within a matter of weeks. through a tremendous community effort, seventy-five primitive dirt roofed log cabins were Giving heed to Brigham Young constructed surrounding the central square. Some cabins abutted each other, while in some instances strong panels of upright posts made palisades between cabins built slightly apart, forming an impregnable wall around the square. Small rear windows were to serve as portholes in case of attack. The inner six acres of the square were enclosed with a heavy pole fence, typical of the old pioneers, which was used as a corral for the protection of the livestock at night.

As Fort Midway was nearing completion. Major General Robert T. Burton and his Chief of Staff, Colonel D. J. Ross of Salt Lake City, made a trip to the valley for the purpose of